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ABSTRACT

Guidelines to help ERIC clearinghouses reach lay persons and inform them of the resources available through the ERIC information network are provided. The guidelines were developed following on-site interviews with persons who have expertise in information dissemination and/or who are actively involved in providing information to citizens involved in educational decision making. The document is organized into six sections in addition to a short introduction. Section 2 presents an historical overview of citizen participation and discusses the implications of citizen involvement in educational decision making for ERIC clearinghouses. Section 3 contains the guidelines for ERIC clearinghouses that wish to expand their user services to meet the information needs of the community. Section 4 is an annotated list of readings on citizen participation in education which suggests resource material to help implement the guidelines. Section 5 contains suggestions about how to conduct a workshop for citizen groups. Finally, section 6 describes an action plan for educational problem solving. (Author/DE)

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ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies Social Science Education

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Boulder, Colorado

GUIDELINES FOR ERIC CLEARINGHOUSES: OUTREACH TO CITIZENS CONCERNED WITH EDUCATIONAL DECISION MAKING

by

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PREFACE

During the past decade community involvement in educational decision making has gained momentum. In an effort to influence the decision-making process, community members have formed citizen advisory boards, community liaison groups, and other kinds of organizations. Other decision-making groups composed of local citizens have long been part of the American educational scene--boards of education, school committees, parent-teacher associations, legislatures, and city councils. These latter groups make all kinds of decisions, including textbook adoption policy, plans for integration, facilities construction, and bargaining procedures.

All individuals and groups involved in the educational decision-making process need to be well informed. The ERIC system can make available a variety of materials that will help them. The ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education has been particularly interested in helping people--educators and lay persons--learn about and use the ERIC system.

All ERIC Clearinghouses are involved in helping users answer education-related questions. Many clearinghouses have been very active in expanding their user networks and in providing information to a variety of ERIC clients on innovative ways to use the ERIC system. This publication should be a useful asset to the tool kit of each ERIC clearinghouse as it begins to work with and help others work with community groups.

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Education Consortium

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I would also like to thank Carl L. Marburger of the National Committee for Citizens in Education (NCCE) for granting us permission to quote from the manuscript of the forthcoming NCCE volume, *Public Testimony* on *Public Schools*, to be published by McCutchan Publishing Corporation, Berkeley, California.

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and Fran Haley (SSEC) for their guidance and comments. Carol Hall (ERIC Clearinghouse for Rural Education and Small Schools), Stanley Salett (National Committee for Citizens in Education), and Carolyn Trahosky (Research and Information Services in Education) gave time willingly and freely to review the publication to determine its appropriateness and quality. Thanks are also due to Janet Jacobs and Karen Wiley who edited the manuscript, to Carol Rayburn for her coordination of the typing, and to Cheryl Kuhn for a speedy and accurate typing job.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

In the past few years more and more parents and lay persons have become involved with the educational decision-making process. This upsurge of citizen activity and involvement has created a need on the part of lay persons for educational information. The ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education (ERIC/ChESS) has developed guidelines to help ERIC clearinghouses reach lay persons and inform them of the resources available through the ERIC information network.

1.2 Background

In order to determine the scope and content of this publication, we conducted telephone interviews with 15 ERIC clearinghouses and 21 ERIC collection holders. We asked questions about the level of interest in citizen participation in education and about methods the clearinghouses and collection holders had used to provide information services to lay persons. The interview data, as well as information obtained through a review of the literature, provided the basis for the first draft of these guidelines. This draft was then revised following on-site interviews with persons who have expertise in information dissemination and/or who are actively involved in providing information to citizens involved in educational decision making.

During the on-site interviews we asked various organizations to react to the preliminary set of guidelines and to provide additional suggestions. Those groups who provided input include the National Committee for Citizens in Education, Columbia, Maryland; The Institute for Responsive Education, Boston, Massachusetts; the Detroit Task Force administrative staff, Detroit, Michigan; the Research and Information Services in Education, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania; the Education Resources Center, New Haven, Connecticut; and the Education Development Center, Newton, Massachusetts. The final version of the guidelines was reviewed by staff persons from an ERIC clearinghouse, an ERIC collection holder, and a citizen liaison group.

1.3 Organization

This document is organized into five sections in addition to this introduction. Section 2.0 contains an historical overview of citizen participation in education and discusses the implications of citizen involvement in educational decision making for ERIC clearinghouses. Section 3.0 contains the guidelines for ERIC clearinghouses who wish to expand their user services to meet the information needs of the community. Sections 4.0 through 6.0 contain resource materials to help implement the guidelines. Section 4.0 is an annotated list of readings on citizen participation in education. Section 5.0 contains suggestions about how to conduct a workshop for citizen groups. Section 6.0 describes an action plan for educational problem solving.

A second set of guidelines was developed for ERIC collection holders. Its title is almost identical to this document's: *Guidelines for ERIC Collection Holders: Outreach to Citizens Concerned with Educational Decision Making*. However, its content is tailored specifically to the needs of collection holders.

2.0 Citizen Participation in Education: Historical Overview

2.1 Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries

In the American colonies of the 17th century, the family had direct control over the education of children. Parents were responsible for providing their children with vocational and social training and for teaching them to read, write, and understand the principles of religion and the laws of the land. Early laws required that elected town officials check periodically to see that parents were carrying out this responsibility (Cremin 1970, pp. 124-125).

In the middle of the 17th century, the Massachusetts General Court set the example soon followed by other states and acted to supplement this informal family education by the establishment of schools. The law of 1647 required that all towns of 50 families or more hire someone to teach reading and writing and that communities of 100 families or more establish a Latin grammar school. These early colonial schools were limited institutions, however, and the primary responsibility for education still remained with parents. Decisions concerning the building and financing of schools, the selection of teachers, school attendance, and other school policy matters were often made by the community in the town meeting (Welter 1962, p. 12).

One vivid example of how lay persons participated in education during this time is the change which took place in the Massachusetts grammar school curriculum as a result of the practical needs of the townspeople. The Massachusetts Bay Colony leaders wanted the town grammar schools to teach Latin and to serve as preparatory schools for those students who would attend Harvard and eventually become political leaders. The townspeople, on the other hand, wanted the grammar schools to teach the practical subjects of English, reading, writing, and arithmetic. To be in compliance with the 1647 law, and at the same time to realize their own immediate needs, voters of the community participated in town meetings and hired teachers who were able to teach Latin as well as more practical subjects. By the year 1700 all towns in Massachusetts had complied with the 1647 law and had established schools. However, the grammar schools had become schools of general studies and Latin had

become a subject of only secondary importance in the curriculum (Sloan 1971, p. 295).

As towns became larger and their populations more complex, control over education shifted from the town meeting to selectmen who were elected by the community to administer local town affairs. Among other duties, the selectmen certified and hired teachers and inspected schools But as the administrative responsibilities of the selectmen increased, they began to delegate their school powers to special sub-committees of selectmen. Control over education by the selectmen, ministers, and school committees had become common practice during the 18th century and was made legal by the Massachusetts Law of 1789 (Cremin 1951, pp. 129-131).

2.2 Nineteenth Century

The Law of 1789 also gave legal recognition to the decentralized district form of school organization. As the town population dispersed to the rural areas, more and more power was vested in the local school district. This practice culminated in the Massachusetts Laws of 1827, which required each town to elect a school committee responsible for the supervision of education. The educational duties formerly held by the selectmen, ministers, and special committees now passed into the hands of lay representatives of the community. Neither professional qualifications nor educational standards were prerequisites for committee membership. According to Lawrence Cremin, "this legislation early established a tradition that the public agencies of school control were to be lay, civil committees with a specialized function peculiar unto themselves" (Cremin 1951, p. 137). By 1830, local control over public schools was a well-established principle in Massachusetts, the most influential of the New England states in the area of education. Educational development in almost every other state followed suit.

As the character of the country changed in the 19th century, educational reform was imminent. Population increase, immigration, industrialization, and urban growth created a complex economic and social stratification. People came to look upon the schools as a "cure-all for society's ills" and education as a means for overcoming widespread urban

poverty. To the influx of immigrants the schools were seen as a "gateway to success for their children." It soon became apparent that the public schools could not continue to function as they had in the less complicated rural system. To correct the inequalities that developed in the increasingly urbanized school districts, and to ensure that schools provided an equal education for everyone, reformers sought to centralize the process for making school decisions. Consequently, many of the educational responsibilities held by local school districts and local school committees were shifted to the states. Decisions regarding the establishments and finance of schools and policies concerning school attendance were now made at the state level. In addition, state schools for the preparation of teachers were established (Katz 1968, pp. 1-13).

2.3 Twentieth Century

By 1900 community influence in education was exercised primarily through the election of community members to local and state school governing boards. Those elected were to represent parents' and laymen's views with regard to school policies. More often than not, however, the views represented were those of professionals and of the social and economic elite. The direct participation of parents in school decision making was rarely sought (Bloomberg 1971, p. 336). This trend continued during the first half of the 20th century, when the population increase, coupled with the consolidation of school districts into larger units, produced a drastic drop in the ratio of school board members to constituents. In 1900, for example, there had been one board member for every 138 citizens; today one board member represents approximately 2470 people (Guthrie and Thomason, forthcoming, pp. 26-27).*

A movement to insulate the schools from the widespread political corruption of the 1900s resulted in the centralization of city school boards. It was argued that, through centralization, the public would be better able to monitor the actions of the board members and to safeguard against the use of the schools for political ends. Delegating more power to fewer elected officials, however, further eroded lay

*All excerpts from Guthrie and Thomason are cited with the permission of the National Committee for Citizens in Education.

participation in school decision making and, at a time when the business of governing schools was becoming more complex and more time consuming, there were fewer elected officials to assume the responsibility. Many cities therefore hired superintendents and professional school administrators to help board members oversee school operations. Although it was intended that these professionals implement policies established by the boards, it soon became clear that they sought and exercised strong control in the school decision-making process. By the 1950s professionals dominated education at the local, state, and federal levels and promoted the notion that curriculum, instruction, and administration in the public schools were esoteric matters beyond the comprehension of the ordinary citizen (Guthrie and Thomason, forthcoming, pp. 29-37).

As the gap between professional educators and the public widened, antagonism toward and mistrust of the schools became prevalent. During the 1940s and 1950s, there were numerous taxpayers' revolts, contested school board elections, and bond referenda. The success of the Russians in launching Sputnik further aggravated the situation, as many Americans believed that the low quality of education in the schools was responsible for the Russian lead in space exploration. Angry and discontented, the public began to seek a larger role in governing the schools. Demands for citizen input were first heard in cities where minority parents were disillusioned by the failure of inner-city schools to educate their children. The demands of black parents triggered the decentralization of many large urban school systems and led to the participation of neighborhood groups and citizens in school decision making (Bloomberg and Kincaid 1968, pp. 5-7).

The trend toward citizen involvement in education also received an impetus from the federal government. Urban renewal in the 1950s, the Model Cities program of the late 1960s, and other federally sponsored programs supported citizen participation in education. The Community Action Program--Title II of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964--was designed to achieve "maximum feasible resident participation." Head Start and Follow Through programs emphasized community input, with parents directly involved in the formulation and administration of school programs (Hallman 1972, pp. 421-423).

Thus the black power movement and the participative thrust of the federally funded public programs motivated lay persons once again to become actively involved in education. Today citizens no longer perceive school officials as authoritarian figures and are no longer afraid to challenge school authority. The 1970s has already proved to be a decade in which communities are taking an active role in improving the education of their children,

The ways in which citizens are becoming involved with education are many and varied. In volunteer and paraprofessional capacities, parents tutor children in reading, assist in the library, and operate audiovisual equipment. Business and industry offer job training in projects such as Philadelphia's Parkway Program, in which students use the city's museums, cultural centers, publishing houses, and other businesses as "classrooms." In addition, lay persons seeking alternatives to public education have developed community schools in many cities across the country. For example, in Flint, Michigan each of the 54 district schools is a Community School which offers varied programs of education recreation, and cultural enrichment to both young and old (Fantini 1972, pp. 677-678). There are many examples of the direct involvement of the community in establishing school policy. In New York State, local residents are helping to "redesign" schools in several school districts. The Education Task Force in Detroit, Michigan is comprised of 73 community persons who are active in making recommendations to the Board of Education. Different types of citizen input are emerging. In some cases citizen groups are consulted by school officials before they make a decision. In other communities, citizen groups serve in a regular advisory capacity or their representatives sit on special governing boards that help determine educational policies and decisions (Fantini 1972, pp. 679-680).

2.4 Summary

The school has as great an influence on the lives of citizens as any other institution in American society. The right of citizens to participate in decisions that will affect their lives and the lives of their children is basic to a democratic system of government. The early colonists exercised this right by participating in the New England town

meeting. They actively engaged in lively debate over educational matters and directly participated in making school decisions. As the nation grew, however, the community involvement in education gradually diminished. Control over education shifted from the town meeting to elected officials and finally to professional educators who were further removed from the community. Increasingly, parents became disillusioned with the quality of education and, overburdened with its cost, began to assert themselves and to demand a greater voice in the education of their children. The 1960s and 1970s have thus been years of educational reform in which citizens are again exercising their role in public education.

There is every reason to expect that the current trend of citizen participation in education will continue. Educational issues are becoming increasingly important as parents demand quality education to meet the diverse needs of a pluralistic society. It is reasonable, then, that citizens will continue to seek their "rightful role as trustee" of one of America's most important institutions--the public school (Fantini 1974, pp. ix-xii).

2.5 Implications for the ERIC System

In communities across the country there are citizen groups engaged in educational activities. Attempting to put the public back into "public education," community members have formed citizen advisory boards, community groups, and other "watchdog" operations for the educational decision-making process. Parents to Protect Neighborhood Schools, Informed Citizens to Promote Quality Education, and Citizens Concerned About Education are organizations common in many American communities today.

Other citizen groups, such as boards of education, school committees, parent-teacher organizations, legislatures, and city councils, have long been part of the American education scene. These bodies frequently make recommendations and legislative decisions about the educational process. For example, in states where there is a state-wide textbook adoption policy, legislative groups often make the final decision about whether textbooks or particular subject areas are included on approved lists.

In order to make sound education-related decisions, both community and legislative groups need information. The Educational Resources

Information Center (ERIC) system contains easily accessible data on many educational topics of interest to those involved in devising school policy. It is therefore essential that those institutions housing ERIC collections actively help communities use and benefit from the ERIC system.

One role that ERIC clearinghouses can assume is that of a "resource linker," advising lay persons in their areas of the resources available to them. (See Havelock 1973, pp. 17-19, for elaboration of the concept of "resource linker.") These include ERIC documents, ERIC information analysis products, human resources, and sources of information outside the ERIC system. By linking citizens who have expressed a need for educational information with pertinent ERIC and non-ERIC resources, ERIC clearinghouses can serve a much needed function.

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3.0 Guidelines to Expand User Services to Lay Persons

Every ERIC Clearinghouse has a user services program. It is usually geared toward helping educators. For example, the ERIC Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education serves social science educators; the ERIC Clearinghouse for Science, Mathematics, and Environmental Education primarily serves science and mathematics educators. In this service capacity, each clearinghouse has developed expertise in meeting client needs. Why not then expand the user services program to include concerned citizens and ERIC collection holders in the clearinghouse region?

To help you initiate an outreach program of this nature, we have developed guidelines that can be used to acquaint the region with clearinghouse services. We will begin by briefly outlining a nine-step approach; each step will then be discussed in greater detail.

--Develop a rationale for providing information services to citizens concerned with education and to ERIC collection holders (section 3.1).

--Allocate a portion of the annual budget to a user services program for citizen groups and collection holders (section 3.2).

--Provide personnel to work directly with citizen groups in the clearinghouse region (section 3.3).

--Build and maintain a resource collection for lay persons concerned with education (section 3.4).

--Expand the clearinghouse acquisitions network by actively soliciting documents related to citizen participation in education (section 3.5).

--Invite lay persons to sit on national and local clearinghouse advisory boards (section 3.6).

--Reach out to citizen groups at the state and regional levels (section 3.7).

  --Identify citizen groups (section 3.71).

  --Inform citizen groups of ERIC services (section 3.72).

  --Initiate follow-up activities (section 3.73).

--Establish contact with and provide supportive services for ERIC collection holders who work with or who are interested in

serving lay groups involved with educational issues (section 3.8).

--Conduct joint workshops with standing order customers (section 3.81).

--Provide information on active citizen groups (section 3.82).

--Distribute publications (section 3.83).

--Offer a "hotline" telephone service (section 3.84).

--Develop an in-house publication for lay persons on the educational needs of communities in your region (section 3.9).

3.1 Develop a Rationale

The first step in expanding a user services program is to develop a rationale that provides a basis for working with citizen groups and ERIC collection holders interested in meeting the educational information needs of lay persons. The rationale should seek to integrate, within the clearinghouse user service function, the provision of services to the two client groups. Such rationale might go something like this:

> "Community participation in educational activities has been increasing in the past ten years. In order to make sound educational decisions, citizens need information. There is a great deal of useful information in the ERIC system on topics of interest to these lay persons. Although the main responsibility of the clearinghouse is to provide services to persons interested in the content scope of the clearinghouse, there is a need to be able to serve the entire educational community within the clearinghouse region. By expanding its user services program and by working closely with collection holders who are in contact with lay groups, the clearinghouse can provide citizen groups within its region with much needed information."

3.2 Allocate Funds

The expansion of a user services program will require a special allocation of funds. A portion of your annual budget might be set aside for implementation of such a program. If you do not have funds available in your budget, you may want to include some of the ideas suggested here in your next proposal, requesting funds specifically for activities to

link citizen groups with the clearinghouse and/or ERIC standing order customers.

3.3 Provide Personnel

A competent and an imaginative staff is an important element in an outreach program. The program coordinator should be someone who has had experience working with lay persons. He or she should be familiar with ERIC and non-ERIC resources of potential interest and value to the new client. Staff members might be asked to identify citizen groups within the clearinghouse region, alert community groups to ERIC services, conduct workshops, perform computer searches, and write news releases about the user services program.

An alternative plan to hiring new personnel might include existing clearinghouse personnel working more closely with community development specialists who are associated with the land grant colleges in each state. One of the major functions of each land grant college is service to the people in the state. They already have very well-developed dissemination systems, such as their extension services. Even though the extension people may be involved primarily with agricultural work, there is a trend toward working directly with community people in other areas.

3.4 Build a Resource Collection

What is the value of citizen participation in education? Have any positive things happened as a result? What are citizen groups in other parts of the country doing? Are there any specific strategies and ideas available for helping lay persons to become involved? Access to materials that answer questions such as these undoubtedly will help clearinghouse user service personnel meet the information needs of citizens.

To build a resource collection of materials and information on citizen involvement in education, you may want to duplicate ERIC microfiche of special value to citizens, purchase hardcopy editions of some exemplary ERIC documents, and copy high-interest journal articles. When possible, gather materials and compile lists of resources that are not available. You might consider shelving the materials in a specific section of the clearinghouse library. Making these resources visible

will help publicize the clearinghouse's citizen user service activities.

Section 4.0 is a selective annotated list of ERIC documents, journal articles, and books dealing with citizen participation in education. It includes works on the value of citizen participation in the education process; materials that contain strategies, ideas, and programs for involving citizens in education; and a listing of other useful bibliographies.

3.5 Expand Acquisitions Network

To meet citizen needs, special attention should be given to the solicitation of documents related to the various educational functions of community groups. Although the ERIC system has already acquired a number of documents related to citizen participation, there is undoubtedly a wealth of information generated by and for lay persons--training manuals, guidelines for conducting educational programs, research reports--that could be included in the ERIC system. Efforts to obtain these publications should be stepped up.

3.6 Include Lay Person(s) on Advisory Boards

Invite community group representatives to serve on local and/or national clearinghouse advisory boards. If a clearinghouse does not have a local advisory board, some consideration should be given to establishing one. Our experience at ERIC/ChESS indicates that local advisory board members can be very helpful in document acquisitions and review, in journal selection, in publication planning, and in generating ideas for user services programs.

3.7 Reach Out to Citizen Groups

There are many state and regional citizen groups who are potential ERIC users.* These groups are interested in education and are often involved in educational decision making. A few of the more familiar organizations include the National Women's Political Caucus (49 state groups),

*In some instances, because of the needs of the area in which you are located, your clearinghouse may want to engage in local (as well as or instead of state and regional) community activities. For practical hints on services you can provide citizen groups at the local level, we refer you to the *Guidelines for ERIC Collection Holders*, available from ERIC/ChESS, 855 Broadway, Boulder, Colorado 80302.

Sierra Club (45 regional groups), League of Women Voters (90 regional groups), state boards of education, and councils of state governments. In addition, citizens often join together at the state level to form pressure groups, commissions, committees, and task forces to foster change in education. These people may have information needs to which ERIC clearinghouses could respond but often they are unaware of the kinds of services you can provide. The following suggestions can help you identify client groups and serve their informational needs:

3.71 Methods to Identify Citizen Groups

3.711 The National Committee for Citizens in Education (NCCE) NCCE is a nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing citizen involvement in education. The organization is in contact with citizen groups throughout the United States and maintains an up-to-date list of the names of these groups by region and state. The NCCE has offered to provide each clearinghouse with the names of groups active in its region on the conditon that the clearinghouse advertise the Committee's nationwide toll-free number (800-NET-WORK). The list compiled by NCCE includes citizen groups active at the state and regional levels as well as community-based groups. Using the information provided by the list, a clearinghouse might introduce the state and regional groups to ERIC, while giving the names of the local groups to interested collection holders. For a copy of the NCCE citizen list, contact Stan Salett, National Committee for Citizens in Education, Suite 410, Wilde Lake Village Green, Columbia, Maryland 21044. Telephone: (301) 997-9300.

3.712 State Department of Education. State education departments often are aware of citizen groups participating in education. Contact the departments in your region and ask for the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of citizen group leaders.

3.713 Newspapers. Identify newspapers that give the widest coverage to educational events in your service area.

Talk with the education editors or reporters responsible for covering the schools and ask them to identify active citizen groups. If you have the time, it would also be helpful to browse through a number of newspapers at the library, scanning the educational articles of the last month or so. Look for articles and editorials that deal with the educational concerns and needs of lay persons. Jot down names of concerned citizens and topics of interest to them.

3.714 *Encyclopedia of Associations*. Another helpful source is Volume 1 of the *Encyclopedia of Associations*, which lists and describes various organizations in the United States. By browsing through sections that cite public affairs, education, and government organizations, you may find some new groups to contact. If you already know the name of a group but need to find out if they have a regional and/or local chapter or if they hold a regional conference, the *Encyclopedia* will be helpful. It also provides the telephone number of the group's national headquarters. (The *Encyclopedia of Associations*, Volume 1, 9th ed., is available from the Gale Research Company, Detroit, Michigan, $45.00.)

3.72 Ways to Inform Citizens about ERIC. Having identified several citizen groups, the next step is to make them aware of ERIC services. Although there are a variety of means by which ERIC can be publicized (newspapers, newsletters, radio, and so on), personal contact is probably the most effective method. The following are a few suggestions for acquainting citizens personally with the ERIC system:

3.721 Clearinghouse Visits. Personally contacting lay persons, identifying the key educational issues of interest to them, and providing useful information about those issues is a good method for reaching lay persons. Telephone a leader or an influential member of a citizen organization. Introduce yourself and ERIC and chat a bit about the interests and the educational needs of the citizen group.

Try to arrange for a time when he or she can visit the clearinghouse for an introduction to ERIC.

When the individual visits the clearinghouse, emphasize the relevance of ERIC documents to his or her needs. For example, if you know beforehand that the group is interested in the voucher system of education, pull three or four of the best microfiche on this topic and copy a couple of good articles. Sit down with the person and demonstrate an ERIC search. Section 6.0 will help you assist persons in using the ERIC system to solve a particular problem. Section 6.1 discusses the process of moving from the identification of a problem to skilled action and Section 6.2 contains specific steps that a citizen can go through to develop an action plan to solve the problem. If a visitor finds useful, pertinent materials and a helpful library staff, he or she is bound to "talk up" this new source of information. Word-of-mouth advertising is often the best kind.

If distance and/or economics prohibit a client from visiting the clearinghouse, mail a few ERIC microfiche and a couple of journal articles pertinent to the educational problem in which he or she is interested. Follow up with a phone call to see if the materials were useful. If they were, a client will probably want to know where the nearest ERIC collection is housed, or you may be invited to do an ERIC workshop for the client's citizen group.

3.722 Workshops. Conducting an ERIC workshop for citizen groups is an excellent way to reach many new potential clients in a short amount of time. Section 5.0 contains guidelines to help you plan a workshop for community groups.

3.73 Follow-up Activities. It is important that you keep in touch with citizen groups to whom you've made an ERIC presentation. One way to do this would be to send out an occasional one- or two-page bulletin announcing new ERIC and/or non-ERIC materials of potential interest to the

group. You might also include descriptions of exemplary projects in which other citizens are involved. Telephone group leaders from time t time so that you remain aware of their information needs.

3.8 Contact and Support ERIC Collection Holders

There are a number of ways in which a clearinghouse can support th efforts of collection holders in their region. Here are a few suggesti that may help:

3.81 Workshops. Ask standing order customers in the clearinghous region to identify the educational problems cited by the most active co munity groups within their service area. Have them send you a list of problems. Then collaborate with the standing order customers in design and/or hosting a workshop to bring together community people, collectio holders, and clearinghouse staff to provide information that can help solve the problems identified.

3.82 Information Source. Provide interested collection holders w the names of citizen groups active in their service areas. The collect holders can then serve in a linking capacity, working directly with the communities to meet their information needs.

3.83 Publications. Occasionally distribute a brief, newsy bullet to collection holders. Announce new materials (ERIC and non-ERIC) of i terest to citizens and describe outstanding citizen group activities in the area. Let collection holders know about current clearinghouse serv to lay groups, including workshops and clearinghouse visits.

Distribute the *Guidelines for ERIC Collection Holders* (available f ERIC/ChESS, 855 Broadway, Boulder, Colorado 80302). It contains practi tips and suggestions to help collection holders provide information ser vices to lay groups in their areas.

3.84 Telephone Service. Offer a "hotline" telephone service to c lection holders. Be on call to plan workshops, provide information, id tify sources of financial assistance, brainstorm proposals, and develop information analysis products for citizens concerned with education.

3.9 Develop an In-house Publication for Lay Persons

If the citizens in your region want information on a particular to

why not write an information analysis paper about it? This is an excellent way to meet information needs, as the experience of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools (ERIC/CRESS) indicates. Some time ago, a lay member of the ERIC/CRESS advisory board suggested that the clearinghouse direct one of its information analysis products toward the lay person. Clearinghouse staff met with representatives from the Farm Bureau, the National School Board Association, the Cattlemen's Association, and other lay groups to determine the kinds of educational information the citizens were seeking. The relationship between communities and school boards seemed to be of most concern. Consequently, ERIC/CRESS in collaboration with lay persons developed a 24-page booklet entitled *How Well Do They Represent You: A Handbook on Rural School Boards for Parents and Other Citizens*. It sells for $1.00. This practical, easy to read booklet discusses the powers and duties of a school board and contains a checklist to help parents evaluate the school board's performance. The *Handbook* was brought to the attention of the community through a short article in a local *Farm Jounal*.*

*Whenever a document is prepared for lay persons it should be written in layman's language; no educational jargon should be used. The document should be critiqued and reviewed by one or more lay persons.

4.0 Citizen Participation in Education: An Annotated List

This brief bibliography lists a number of ERIC documents and journal articles on citizen participation in education. Materials were selected from references listed in *Resources in Education*, *Current Index to Journals in Education*, and *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature*. The items cited are only a small percentage of the materials that might have been included.

The bibliography is divided into three sections. Section 4.1, "Value of Citizen Participation in Education," includes materials that describe positive results of community involvement in education. Section 4.2 is entitled "Strategies, Ideas, and Programs for Citizen Involvement in Education" and includes a small sampling of guidelines, models, and "how-to-do it" materials. Section 4.3 describes two useful bibliographies.

4.1 Value of Citizen Participation in Education

Adams, Velma. "Taxpayers Out to Change the Schools." *School Management*, 18:6 (June-July 1974) pp. 22-26.

Brief descriptions of citizen action groups are provided. Their problems, achievements, organizations, and value to the community are examined.

Chopra, Raj K. "Money--Who Needs It?" *Community Education Journal*, 4:5 (Sep.-Oct. 1974) pp. 51-52.

Describes the combined efforts of a community and school system to develop and maintain a community education program without special funding.

Coon, George, Robert Christina, Ronald L. Cramer, and Doris Sponseller. *The Role of a Community Committee in an Early Childhood Project*. Rochester, MI: Oakland University School of Education, 1974. 17 pp. ED 098 722.

Describes the Oakland University Early Childhood Project, which developed a plan for involving the community in a university program. The interaction between the university and community members is credited with improving the university's ability to service the community.

Cousins, Norman. "The Layman as Ally in Education." *School Counselor*, 21:4 (Mar. 1974) pp. 260-265.

Focuses on the participation of laymen as an asset to the educational process. The article maintains that tax and budget problems, in particular, are more constructively resolved if they are discussed after, not before, a consideration of basic educational purposes.

Davies, Don. "The Emerging Third Force in Education." *Inequality in Education*, 15 (Nov. 1973) pp. 5-12.

Focuses on parents and citizens as the main hope for reform in public schools. The article contends that citizen participation in educational decision making taps new ideas and energy and provides leverage to bring about reform in improving the quality of services.

Herman, Barry E. "Community Involvement--A Positive Approach in Education." *Intregrated Education*, 9:2 (Mar.-Apr. 1971) pp. 28-30.

The principal of Winchester Community School, New Haven, Connecticut, discusses the positive results of having parents interview teaching applicants.

May, Lucius J. "Community Involvement: The Detroit Experience." *Community Education Journal*, 4:3 (May-June 1974) pp. 52-53.

Relates some of the significant developments arising from a large school district's program aimed at school-community involvement.

O'Neil, William F. "Boston: Community Schools from the Grass Roots." *Community Education Journal*, 4:5 (Sep.-Oct. 1974) pp. 29-30.

Discusses the grass roots citizen pressure that led to the formation of community schools to replace elementary schools in Boston. The community schools are operated by the Boston School Committee during the regular school day and by the Department of Public Facilities in the extended day and evening.

"Rebuilding a School: Four Views on Community Participation." *Council of Educational Facility Planners Journal*, 11:3 (June 1973) pp. 8-11.

Discusses community involvement in planning the construction of a school.

4.2 Strategies, Ideas, and Programs for Citizen Involvement in Education

Beane, James A. "Organizing the School and Community for Cooperative Planning." *Community Education Journal*, 3:5 (Sep. 1973) pp. 26-28.

Discusses the establishment of a district-wide steering committee or educational council to promote meaningful community involvement in educational planning. Case studies of four districts illustrate alternative strategies for developing school-community cooperation.

Carrillo, Tony S., and Israel C. Heaton. "Strategies for Establishing a Community Education Program." *Phi Delta Kappan*, 54:3 (Nov. 1972) pp. 165-167.

Fourteen steps in building a community education program are explained. The emphasis is on community education as a way of life and not just as another experimental program.

Citizen Action in Education, 1:1 (Winter 1974) 12 pp. ED 091 293. Also available from the Institute for Responsive Education, Yale University, 70 Sachem St., New Haven, CN 06520 (free).

The first issue of this newsletter discusses methods to identify people, places, projects, and new ideas in participatory education. The lead article focuses on the purposes and role of the institute as an investigator in the field of citizen participation in educational decision making. News items present brief notes on other groups in the United States who are also contributing to the community involvement goal. One major article describes a citizen participation model, "Public Schools of Choice," developed by Mario Fantini, and another discusses the rights of unions and teachers. A book review concludes the issue, reviewing a parent's experience in fighting for improved school services in New York City.

Education for the People: Guidelines for Total Community Participation in Forming and Strengthening the Future of Public Elementary and Secondary Education in California. 2 vols. Sacramento, CA: California State Department of Education, 1972. 356 pp. ED 066 822. Available only from the Joint Committee on Educational Goals and Evaluation, Assembly Post Office Box 83, State Capitol, Sacramento, CA 95814 ($4.05).

Describes the California State program for increased citizen participation in decision making in education. Volume 1 discusses the processes for determining school goals, objectives, and priorities. Volume 2 is designed to serve as a resource book for school and community leaders. It focuses on goal determination, methods for improving interpersonal communication, needs assessment, and group involvement. The report also describes achievements in two model communities.

Fagan, Dorothy F. "Community Participation in Decision Making." *Educational Horizons*, 52:1 (Fall 1973) pp. 10-13.

Describes community-school interaction programs that have produced

positive results in the Pasadena, California, Unified School District.

Flemmings, Vincent C., and Farrell L. McClane. *Planning for Effective Community School Relations: A Manual of Procedures.* New York, NY: Center for Urban Education, 1972. 49 pp. ED 087 981.

Provides practical procedures and suggestions for designing, conducting, and evaluating a workshop in community-school relations. Includes tips on stipends, staffing, and workshop activities.

Flores, Robert R. "Wanted--Community Involvement in Education." *School Management,* 15:12 (Dec. 1971) pp. 28, 29, 48.

Suggestions for obtaining minority-group involvement in education are provided.

Goble, Nicholas. "Planning Community Involvement in School Decision-Making." *Pennsylvania Education,* 3:6 (July-Aug. 1972) pp. 4-5.

Includes the National School Board Association's guidelines for effective community involvement.

Handbook for Community Organization. Durham, NC: Foundation for Community Development, 1969. 62 pp. ED 053 357. Also available from the Community Organization Project, Southern Regional Council, Inc., 5 Forsyth Street, N.W., Atlanta, GA 30303 (no price quoted).

Provides practical guidelines for forming a community action group, with suggestions about organization, funding, and political effectiveness.

Hoffman, David B., Janet S. Jordan, and Florence McCormick. *Parent Participation in Preschool Daycare.* Atlanta, GA: Southeastern Education Laboratory, 1971. 227 pp. ED 054 863.

An overview of principles and methods for involving parents in child care, daycare, and child development programs. It clarifies and broadens the concept of parent participation and provides examples and practical suggestions for effectively involving parents in all aspects of day care.

Hoke, Fred, Donald D. Basile, and Robert C. Whiting. "How to Improve Community Attitudes." *Phi Delta Kappan,* 53:1 (Sep. 1971) pp. 30-32.

Provides a brief report on a federally financed project in Ohio County, West Virginia, that identified the causes of public neglect of the schools and tested possible remedies. In the course of the project, concerned citizens tried to educate the majority of uncommitted citizens.

Johnson, C. Montgomery, and Virginia Clocksin. *School Bond Issues: Pass-Fail. Community Plan of Action in Support of Schools.* Chicago: IL: Sports Foundation, Inc., 1972. 40 pp. ED 078 561. Also available from Compass, Suite 1400, 221 LaSalle St., Chicago, IL 60601 ($2.00).

Provides ideas, plans, and activities for winning a school bond election. Of special interest are the campaign roles of civic clubs, citizen committees, Parent Teacher Associations, and school personnel.

Koslofsky, Norman. "The Critical Role of the Ombudsman." *Clearinghouse,* 48:7 (Mar. 1974) pp. 399-401.

Focuses on the use of an ombudsman as one way to increase communication between the school and community. Practical guidelines for developing such a position are outlined.

Lumpe, Gus. "Need Local Support? Put Your Constituents in Your Board Seat--For a Night." *American School Board Journal,* 160:6 (June 1973) pp. 40-41.

Discusses the experience of a community in Clayton, Missouri, where, in order to bridge the communications gap between school board and the citizenry, parents and taxpayers switched roles with school board members.

McClane, Farrell L., Vincent C. Flemmings, Linda Pimentel, and Wilease Fields. *Community-School Relations Workshop: A Workshop Leader's Guide.* New York, NY: Center for Urban Education, 1972. 74 pp. ED 089 181.

Provides 15 sample units designed to assist a workshop leader in conducting a session in community-school relations. The units include problem awareness activities, role-playing exercises, problem-solving activities, and planning strategies for the future.

MacMillan, Richard K. "School-Community Advisory Councils in Flint." *Community Education Journal,* 4:3 (May-June 1974) pp. 20-22.

Describes the role of community advisory councils in one school district.

Mann, Dale. "Political Representation and Urban School Advisory Councils." *Teachers College Record,* 75:3 (Feb. 1974) pp. 279-307.

Describes a program designed to increase community involvement in the design and implementation of local educational programs and policies.

Morgan, Frank W., Jr. "Vermont's Community-Involved 'Open' School." *American Education*, 9:5 (June 1973) pp. 10-15.

Discusses a village school teacher's efforts to combine innovative ideas with traditional values in order to include community members in the town's elementary school program.

Participation of the Poor in the Community Decision-Making Process. Washington, DC: Office of Economic Opportunity, Community Action Program, 1969. 43 pp. ED 037 645.

Key factors that promote, through group interactions, participation of the poor in community decision-making processes, programs, and activities are identified. These include techniques and practical suggestions that Community Action Program grantees have used successfully to enhance participation.

Smith, Mortimer. "Can Control of the Public Schools Be Returned to the Citizens?" *Education Digest*, 40:4 (Dec. 1974) pp. 38-39.

Recommends the "Florida Plan" to increase public participation in education. This plan, adopted by the state of Florida in 1973, divides the school system into individual school sites and provides for parent advisory councils to help the school board select the principal and allocate resources.

Toward More Effective Involvement of the Community in the School. Dayton, OH: Institute for Development of Educational Activities, 1972. 28 pp. ED 072 527. Also available from Institute for Development of Educational Activities, Suite 300, 5335 Far Hills Ave., Dayton, OH 45429 ($2.00).

Recommendations for increasing the effectiveness of traditional parent organizations, local community groups, and school administrators in community-school interaction are provided.

van Willigen, John, and Allyn G. Spence. "Parental Involvement in Schools." *Northian*, 9:3 (Spring 1973) pp. 43.

Two basic questions are examined: why is parental involvement in schools valuable and, if it is, how may it be achieved?

Wilcox, Preston. "Parental Decision-Making: An Educational Necessity." *Theory Into Practice*, 11:3 (June 1972) pp. 178-182.

Describes the AFRAM Parent Implementation Educational Follow Through Model in New York City in which parents acted as the key decision makers/participants in converting the school community into a new family group.

4.3 Bibliographies

Davies, Don. *Citizen-Participation in Education: Annotated Bibliography*. New Haven, CN: Institute for Responsive Education, 1974. 168 pp. ED 088 818. Also available from Institute for Responsive Education, 70 Sachem St., New Haven, CN 06520 ($3.00).

Focuses on citizen participation in education in the areas of decision making, policy development, and school governance in the public school system. Four hundred references are annotated, including books, reports, and journal articles. The references are organized into ten sections: Theoretical Background, Community Action, School Problems, School Politics, Community Control and Citizen Advisory Committees, Community Schools, Administration and Accountability, Guides for Citizens, Bibliographies and Books, and Dissertations (a listing without annotations).

ERIC Abstracts: A Collection of ERIC Document Resumes on Citizen Involvement in the Control of Schools. Washington, DC: American Association of School Administrators, and Eugene, OR: University of Oregon, ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Administration, 1970. 28 pp. ED 044 832. Also available from the American Association of School Administrators, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036 ($2.00 each, quantity discounts).

Includes ERIC abstracts listed in RIE through November 1970. The key terms used in compiling this collection are "citizen participation," "decentralization," "school community relationship," and "school district autonomy."

5.0 Guidelines for a Community Workshop

It is not our intention to provide a step-by-step program for a community workshop. Rather, the following suggestions offer some general guidelines that may be useful in planning a workshop of this nature.

5.1 Plan for Participants' Needs

It is very easy for workshop leaders who are "full" of their topic to overload participants with their interests. Before you do any specific planning, find out the needs of the participants and tailor the workshop to these needs. Involve the group in planning and conducting the workshop as much as possible.

5.2 Consider New Models

If you have used a particular training format successfully for years, do not assume that this format will be applicable for others, especially community people. Think about new models and designs.

5.3 Build on Participants' Expertise

Often, it is assumed that workshop participants know very little. Recognize that community people have a lot of expertise in various areas. Any workshop should be designed to build upon the knowledge of the participants.

5.4 Use Experiential Activities and Informality

All community people have probably been in school at one time or another and, therefore, may have developed some negative images of the classroom, which they might associate with a workshop of this kind. Try to design a session so that it is informal and so that participants can engage in experiential activities.

5.5 Keep It Short

Recognize that community people have a limited amount of time for training activities. You will be dealing with very busy people. Make workshop sessions short, focus on the topic of interest, and do not

demand too much of the participants' time.

5.6 Involve Several Similar Organizations

Many community organizations have somewhat similar purposes. If possible, try to involve a number of organizations in the same workshop activities.

5.7 Follow Up

A workshop should not be a one-time experience. In preparing for a session, consider the possible avenues for follow-up.

(For additional suggestions see Eva Schindler-Rainman and Ronald Lippitt, *The Volunteer Community*, Chapter VI, Washington, DC: NTL Learning Resources Corporation, 1971.)

6.0 An Action Plan for Educational Problem Solving

Many of the ideas in this section are a result of the work of the late Robert S. Fox, former director of ERIC/ChESS. He developed, along with James E. Davis, an earlier version of this problem-solving approach, which has never been published. The plan presented here is based on the unpublished work.

6.1 Linking Intentions to Skilled Action

All of us in education are problem solvers, whether we are operating as individuals or as members of a group. Usually we are fairly clear about our intentions and goals. Translating these intentions into skilled or skillful action is rarely given a second thought. The emphasis in our educational system has been placed on helping people learn verbal behavior. Thus, one can learn the skills of communicating without relating these skills to behavior. In fact, there is little in the school curriculum at any level that focuses on behavioral skill training.

One vivid example comes from a situation in which considerable animosity was being generated between the professional and secretarial staff of an organization. In dealing with the problem, staff members were willing to examine their own positions and actions. Through role-playing activities it was found that most of the staff had sophisticated verbal notions about the appropriate things to do, and the things they really wanted to do. But when it came to actualizing their ideas, behaviorally, they exhibited very little skill. There was a tremendous discrepancy between the sophistication they had in expressing verbal intentions and their ability to link these intentions to effective behavior.

All of us have this deficiency in varying degrees. We may be able to conduct a sophisticated ERIC search. We can, perhaps, build excellent plans based on information retrieved from ERIC documents and other information. But when asked, "What will you say and how will you say it to (a superior) when we present our plan?", most of us are at a loss.

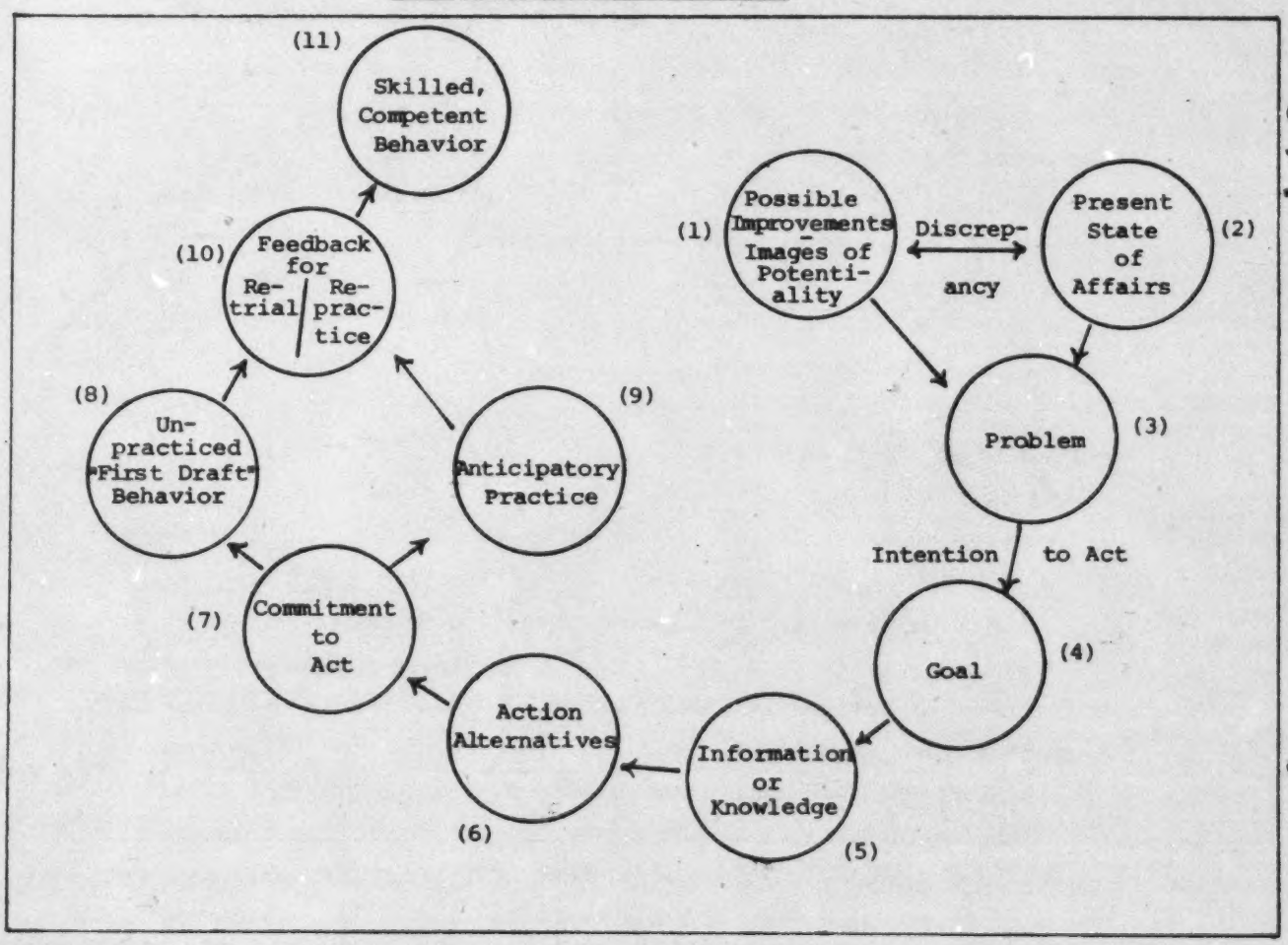
Think of all the ways in which we are taught and teach ourselves to be rewarded for closures that stop short of interactive behavior. For instance, performing well on a written test is a closure that stops short

of any kind of behavior that directly involves another person. Another example is what might be called the "righteous closure." That is, "I know my values are right or my intentions are good; therefore my behavior must be valid. Anybody who gives me feedback that my behavior is not adequate, must be wrong because I know what my intentions are and surely my behavior must reflect my intentions."

Let's take a look at how our intentions can be translated into behavior. Please study the diagram below, the components of which will be examined in some depth. Note that in the discussion that follows, the bracketed numbers correspond to the numbers on the diagram.

Figure 1.

Educational Problem Solving--Linking Intentions to Skilled Action



For many of us the process of educational problem solving begins with an assignment from a superior, such as to develop a curriculum on information utilization. In this situation there does not seem to be a clear commitment on the part of the problem solver to move toward problem solution. One way to link a problem to the processes going on within the individual is to start by identifying some of the things that the individual would like to see happen in his or her classroom, school system, library, or community organization--"images of potentiality" or "possible improvements" (1). Then compare these to the data about the present state of affairs (2). The apparent discrepancies will point up some of the problems that might be worth working on (3). Restating one of these problems as a goal to work toward (4) again taps the inner concerns of the problem solver by assuming some intentions to act (shown in the diagram as a link between problem and goal). Having a goal pushes one to seek resources that may help in moving toward this goal--information or knowledge (5). The knowledge may reside in an information-gathering system like ERIC, or it may lie with colleagues, schools, or other organizations attempting to work toward the same goal. A good search will enhance the possibility of identifying action alternatives (6). Having such choices available ties into the individual's inner processes and values, and testing one of these possibilities creates a commitment to action (7).

Most of us test an action alternative by just doing it. This is called unpracticed, "first-draft" behavior (8). Another possibility is to engage in anticipatory practice or try-out through role playing (9). Both the unpracticed, "first-draft" behavior and the anticipatory practice need to have a built-in feedback system (10) so that the problem solver can revise his behavior through retrial or repractice.

The concept of anticipatory practice was developed long ago by Genghis Khan. The idea has not been used very extensively in U.S. education, although it has been used actively by the military and by industry. If anticipatory practice is presented in the school at all, it is treated mechanically in some of the so-called simulation/game activities. There are two key ideas for linking feedback to skilled behavior. Most of our behavior is in situations where our actions are on

the line. In other words, we are being critically evaluated, so that it is pretty hard to be open, to be flexible, or to consider alternatives while we are involved in such critical interaction processes. Therefore to get feedback about my behavior, I must be in a situation where *I am not playing for keeps*. This may be a role-playing situation or a situation in which there is interpersonal support for taking risks.

Looking at our diagram we can see some of the steps that are needed to link ideas, goals, and intentions to skilled, competent behavior (11). Many of us do not capitalize on the support these linkages would bring to our problem-solving efforts if we were actually to forge such a chain of internal thought and external behavior. Very frequently intentions fall by the wayside because they are not linked to enough alternatives to provide behavioral success. In most problem situations, the participants will agree on the commitment and the intention. Then someone comes up with a plan and the group zeros in on that one action suggestion. No matter how skilled the behavior, if the action suggestion is on the wrong track, it will fail. The group will not succeed because alternative behavior was not considered.

Let us use the example of a staff meeting. Perhaps there are several people who want more productive and enjoyable staff meetings. Someone says, "Well, that's easy, all we need to do is change the seating and have coffee available; that will do it." And somebody else says, "That's right, that is what we'll do." The mistake here is to overlook other improvements needed to make a better staff meeting. Seating and coffee might not be the most critical factors. We also should recognize that while many groups have goals and aims, they have no intention of acting on these goals. Take the example of a community-faculty leadership team in a metropolitan elementary school. The goal of the principal and his cabinet was to work out a proposal for an acre of grass to be planted in front of the school building. When a team member was asked, "Do you think that's really a very realistic goal to work on for a whole day?", he replied, "No, I don't think so." "So why are you spending so much time and energy on it?" "Well," he said, "so when we fail we won't feel guilty."

Perhaps these examples can help remind us of our own experiences.

Each of us has our own techniques of "premature closure." That is, we pat ourselves on the back at various points short of real action. All of us involved in both formal and nonformal education are challenged to link our ideas first to goals and then to skilled action.

6.2 Developing an Action Plan

The purpose of this section is to offer some specific steps for developing an action plan to solve an educational problem. As you read along, you might think of how you would develop your own problem-solving approach.

Below is a sample of an "Action Plan Worksheet."

Figure 2.

Action Plan Worksheet

Goal: _____

_____

_____

Force Selected to Work on: _____

_____

_____

Action Idea(s) Chosen: _____

_____

_____

What Will Be Done?	Who Will Do It?	Where & When?	How?	Special Resources Needed

The first step in action planning is to write down, as specifically as possible, an action goal statement. Think of the possible goals you or a group with which you are working may have. How would you state a goal? Here are some criteria for a good goal statement: (1) The goal statement must be something that you or the group think is important. (2) The goal must be manageable. That is, the goal should be something you think you can accomplish. (3) The goal should be measurable. For example, to improve education is not a very measurable goal, whereas to develop a program to use at least ten parent volunteers within the next six months is an objective that can be measured.

The second step is to do a force field analysis to identify those forces that may help or prevent you from successfully reaching your goal. Briefly stated, a force field is the dynamic set of forces that are currently in balance, keeping a situation from changing. In any situation there are supporting forces (forces that press for change) and restraining forces (forces that block change). It is possible to cause change by increasing the supporting forces. However, when we increase the pressure for change, we sometimes find that the restraining forces also increase. Therefore, it is often more effective to diminish the strength of one or more of the restraining forces, allowing the supporting forces to push in a positive direction. An illustration of a force field analysis is shown on the next page.

Note that the current situation with regard to the stated goal is shown by means of perpendicular line down the center of the diagram. It is assumed that the condition is one in which there is no program for parent volunteers. If all the forces have been clearly identified, the restraining forces are exactly balancing the supporting forces. Hence, no change. If change is desired, some of the forces will have to be modified to throw the field out of balance. This should result in movement of the center line to the right in the direction of the goal. Take just a few seconds to look at some of the forces identified as examples in this illustration of a force field analysis.

As you do your own analysis, be sure to list all the supporting and restraining forces of which you are aware. Do not be selective. Jot down everything that comes to mind. You might want to think of supporting

Figure 3.

Force Field Analysis

Goal: To develop, within the next six months, a program to use at least ten parent volunteers in our school so that teachers feel the parent contributions are helpful and parents appreciate the opportunity to help. (Principal's goal)

Supporting Forces →	← Restraining Forces
Self	
A good parent volunteer program is the mark of a good school.	I don't know very many of our parents.
I'd like to know more of the parents.	It may take a lot of my time.
Significant Others	
Some members of the School Board have expressed an interest in a parent volunteer program.	The superintendent has not expressed a position on the idea.
Institutional	
Bear Creek School has implemented such a program.	Concern by some teachers that volunteers are not dependable.
etc.	etc.

and restraining forces in three categories: those within yourself; those coming from "significant others," such as members of your family, members of your organization, or members of other groups; and institutional forces.

After completing the force field, the third step is to choose one force that you feel you can do something about--or one you feel has a high priority. (Remember that it may be a good strategy to deal with restraining forces first.) Once you have selected a force, it should be written down on the Action Plan Worksheet.

The fourth step in the action plan is to brainstorm all the things you may be able to do to change the strength of the force selected. If you are working with a group, you should follow the rules of brainstorming. These are: (1) List all the ideas that come to mind. (2) Do not discuss the ideas during the brainstorming session. (3) Do not judge the ideas listed. (4) Repetition of ideas should be allowed. If a group brainstorming session is not feasible, you might show the list you develop by yourself to others to see what suggestions they may have. After you have completed the brainstorming, select one or several of the ideas on which you would like to begin work.

The last is to write down the specific details of how to carry out the ideas proposed. It is appropriate now to decide who will do what, when and where the action will take place, how it will take place, and whether any special resources are needed. For example, in the development of a volunteer program, the principal may choose to work with the superintendent, who is a restraining force because of his ambivalence. One entry under "What Will Be Done?" may be,"Write a letter to the superintendent." "Who Will Do It?" "Myself." "When?" "By a week from Friday." And so on.

These procedures for developing an action plan can be useful and productive. Why not try them out and see what happens?